

Message Text

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42

ACTION EA-14

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FM AMEMBASSY SAIGON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5705

USDEL JEC PARIS

C O N F I D E N T I A L SAIGON 14342

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MOPS, VS

SUBJECT: VC COMBAT HAMLETS IN BAC LIEU

FOLLOWING RECEIVED FROM AMCONSUL CAN THO BEING REPEATED

QUOTE

CAN THO 0634

E.O. 11652 GDS

TAGS: MOPS, VS

SUBJECT: VC COMBAT HAMLETS IN BAC LIEU

1. RECENT BAC LIEU SECTOR BRIEFINGS REVEAL THAT THE VC ARE ATTEMPTING TO CONSTRUCT WHAT THEY TERM COMBAT HAMLETS IN THE PROVINCE. A SECTOR SOURCE SAID JULY 20 THAT TWO MONTHS AGO THE SECTOR HAD RECEIVED A REPORT THAT THE VC HAD ISSUED ORDERS TO CONSTRUCT COMBAT HAMLETS (AP CHIEN DAU). THE SAME SOURCE SAID THAT IN EARLY JULY SECTOR FORCES HAD CAPTURED A VC QUANG LONG DISTRICT LEVEL DOCUMENT GIVING ORDERS TO CONSTRUCT THE SAME. THE DOCUMENT WAS GENERAL IN NATURE AND MADE MENTION OF THE SPECIFIC AREA IN BAC LIEU.

2. MORE RECENT INFORMATION FROM BAC LIEU HAS IT THAT CRUDE VC SHELTERS HAVE BEEN CONSTRUCTED CLOSE TO VINH HUNG VILLAGE, CONFIDENTIAL

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PHUOC LONG DISTRICT (WR6842). A PROVINCE INTELLIGENCE

OFFICER TOLD THE AMERICAN PROVINCE REPRESENTATIVE THAT RECENT REPORTS OF NEWLY CONSTRUCTED BUNKERS AND VC SHELTERS WERE PROBABLY PART OF THE VC COMBAT HAMLET CAMPAIGN. HE POINTED OUT ONE AREA IN BA XUYEN PROVINCE JUST NORTH OF BAC LIEU'S VINH HUNG VILLAGE, WHERE HE SAID HE FELT SURE THERE WERE ABOUT 20 NEW SHELTERS.

3. THE SECTOR S-2 CONFIRMED VC ATTEMPTS TO BUILD COMBAT HAMLETS BUT DESCRIBED THEM AS MERELY SMALL DEFENSE PERIMETERS AROUND A FEW BUNKERS AND SHABBY SHELTERS WITH NO PEOPLE INSIDE. HE SAID HE FELT THE VC WANTED TO MOVE PEOPLE INTO THESE AREAS BUT BELIEVED THEY WERE NOT CAPABLE OF ATTRACTING ANY.

4. COMMENT: IT IS UNLIKELY THAT THE GVN WILL SIMPLY ACCEPT THESE VC INITIATIVES AND THERE ARE INDICATIONS THAT ARTILLERY MIGHT WELL BE USED TO DEAL WITH THE NEW SHELTERS IN BAC LIEU PROVINCE. THE REPORTS OF VC DEVELOPMENT ATTEMPTS IN BAC LIEU ARE SIMILAR TO REPORTS FROM CHAU DOC AND VINH LONG. LEHMANN UNQUOTE
MARTIN

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